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BRETON'S
Melancholike Humours.

WITH
A CRITICAL PREFACE,
BY
SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, BART. K.J.

"Alike is Nature's voice in every age;
And the true Poet pours his love-lorn notes
In the same tone through distant centuries."

ANON.



KENT:
PRINTED AT THE PRIVATE PRESS OF THE PRIORY;
BY JOHNSON AND WARWICK.

1815.



TO
RICHARD HEBER, Esq.

OF
BODNET, IN SHROPSHIRE,

THIS
WORK OF BRETON

IS
DEDICATED,

IN
*ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF HIS BRILLIANT TALENTS AND
UNEQUALLED ACQUIREMENTS,*

BY

S. E. B.

London, March 20, 1815.

LEE PRIORY PRESS.

SHORTLY WILL BE PUBLISHED, IN QUARTO, HIGHLY EMBELLISHED,

Speeches delivered to Queen Elizabeth,

AT

SUDELEY CASTLE:

WITH A PREFACE, BY SIR EGERTON BRYDGES, BART. K. J.

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MELANCHOLIKE HUMOURS,

IN

VERSES OF DIVERSE NATURES;

SET DOWN BY

NICHOLAS BRETON, GENT.



LONDON:

PRINTED BY RICHARD BRADOCKE.

1600.

TO THE LOVER OF GOOD STUDIES,
AND FAVOURER OF GOOD ACTIONS,
MASTER THOMAS BLOUNT,
HEAVEN'S BLESSING AND EARTH'S HAPPINESS.

SIR,



Y knowledge of your good judgment in the diversity of humours, and your disposition to that best melancholy, that cannot run mad with trifles, hath made me (upon the gathering together of certain odd pieces of poetry) to offer my labours to your patience, and my love to your service. They are all waters of one spring: but they run through many kinds of earth, whereof they give a kind of tang^a in their taste. Such as they be, I leave them to the kindness of your acceptation, and myself to your like commandment. And so (loth to use ceremonious compliments) in the affection of a poor friend, and in humble thankfulness for your many undeserved favours,

I rest yours, very much to command,

N. B.

^a Tang here seems to mean flavour, or relish. In Lincolnshire they call the sting the tang of a bee or wasp. T. P.

EDITOR'S PREFACE

TO

BRETON'S "*Melancholike Humours.*"



PERHAPS the public will be better pleased with the short Lyric Poems contained in this Collection, than with the extended production, entitled, "*The Longing of a Blessed Heart,*" &c. which issued last year from the *Lee Press.*

I know nothing of Master THOMAS BLOUNT, "the lover of good studies, and favourer of good actions," to whom these "*Verses of diverse Natures*" are dedicated. Perhaps he was one of the house of Edward Blount the bookseller: for it does not seem, by any addition of gentility, as if he was of the noble family of *Pope Blount*, which soon afterwards gave so many ornaments to literature.

Ben Jonson's *Commendatory Verses* are far above the usual strain of unmeaning panegyric. The praise is appropriate, and has the appearance of sincerity.

Almost from a boy, the little pieces of BRETON, which I found in "*Percy's Ballads,*" pleased me above almost all in

2 Editor's Preface.

that Collection; and for many years I sought in vain for other specimens of his genius. The small Tracts, in which his Poems are preserved, though large impressions were probably taken of them, have for at least a century occurred more rarely to the lover of our old bards, than almost any other popular pieces of the same period. I owe the transcript of the present reprint to the unabated kindness of my liberal and truly intelligent friend, Mr. Park of Hampstead.

In old poetry, it too frequently happens, that we are necessitated to wade through a heavy proportion of crude, inharmonious, and repulsive matter, for the sake of a few happier passages, sparingly intermixed with them. If my taste does not mislead me very widely, the reader will not have the same complaint on the present occasion. There is a tender mellifluence in these verses of BRETON, running through whole poems, which fills me with admiration.

In the Address "*To his Thoughts*" in the first poem, with what a calm and noble melancholy does the Poet exclaim:

"If your labours well deserve,
Let your silence only grace them;
And in patience hope preserve,
That no fortune can deface them!"

The confidence of this affecting author shall not be disap-

Editor's Preface. . . . 3

pointed, if the wishes and efforts of the present editor can avail! The soft notes of a plaintive bosom, conveyed in elegant and polished language, after having died away upon the stream of Time, shall rise again upon the ear of posterity, and agitate once more the feeling heart, and cultivated understanding.

There is an unadorned pathos in the fourth poem, "*A Doleful Passion*," which could only have been written under the influence of deep suffering and despondence.

In the twenty-first piece, (p. 51,) entitled, "*A Quarrel with Love*," there is extraordinary subtlety and ingenuity of thought, a most happy airiness of expression, and inimitable simplicity of harmonious metre. It is not easy to account for the oblivion, which has enveloped a poet, who could write in this manner.

Is it an idle curiosity that wishes to unfold the secrets of the grave? I would willingly draw back the veil from the story of this Author's misfortunes! He bewails in so many of his writings his sorrows, his sufferings, and his melancholy, that it is impossible to believe these complaints to have been "conjured up for the occasion:" and we seem to have Ben Jonson's authority for our belief that they arose from no fancied causes.

4 Editor's Preface.

If BRETON was the same person, who owned the manor of Norton, in Northamptonshire, poverty could scarcely be the ground of his anxieties: for that lordship was transmitted to the owner's male posterity, who are still in affluence, and only sold it within these twenty years. On the whole, it seems more probable that the poet was a collateral branch of the same ancient house.

It is the fashion to consider a querulous disposition little entitled to the favour of the public. If by querulous be meant an abundant indulgence in the utterance of fanciful griefs, the reprobation is surely just. But it is far otherwise with the expression of real and unaffected sorrow. Cares and misfortunes so universally touch, at some period of life, every feeling bosom, that sympathy with the utterance of genuine grief is a mental exercise almost generally grateful to intellectual beings. He, who cannot distinguish true, from pretended, sensibility, must be himself insensible. There is a touch, a colouring, in it, beyond the reach of Art. BRETON, every where, exhibits this touch, and colouring.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth was a period of difficulty for the individuals whom it excited to fame and distinction, in which was cherished an emulation of great things with insufficient means. The splendour required of the great nobility far ex-

ceeded the unproductive rentals of their estates. The cries of poverty and distress, which their private letters exhibit, are often very striking. What must then have been the case of the private gentry who followed the Court? And most of all, of the wretched dependents, who hunted after Court-patronage? Of men, who, as their only pass-port, were necessitated to waste their little and precarious subsistence in expensive pageantries, and gaudy clothes?

The great Heroine, who sat upon the throne, had only a choice of difficulties through a perilous reign; and her heart made of stern materials exacted, without much apparent regret, hard measure of her subjects.

Perhaps it was to circumstances such as these, that the difficulties of BÆTON'S career through life were owing! Perhaps, of gentle and honourable blood, which early excited him to look to refined society, and superior station, he had not the pecuniary means to secure that, to which his birth taught him to look; and in the alternacy between the strenuous exertions of worldly ambition, and the delirious forgetfulness of the Muse's libations, the excursive wanderings of one day undid the whole painful progress of another, till exhausted spirits and continued disappointments brought on melancholy and despair.


Such at least has too often been the struggle of many a great

6 Editor's Preface.

and lamented genius through this world of danger and mischance! Let him, who seeks the Muse's favours as the reward of his toils, not hope that he can join with them a worldling's pursuits! The daily plodder, who bends neither to the right nor to the left, whose eye is never drawn aside by a landscape however beautiful, and whose hand is never tempted to gather a flower even on the edge of his path, will win the goal of worldly power and renown, long before him, even at a snail's pace!

BRETON enjoyed among his cotemporaries a general popularity. But it has been too frequently proved that fame and support have no necessary nor even probable connection, in the walks of Poetry. A giddy public, while pleased with the Songster's ditties, neither thought nor cared about the fate or sufferings of him who produced them. It is a resistless and incomprehensible passion, which still impels the tuneful complainer to breathe forth his strains of delight or pathos in defiance of the pressure of neglect or want. Could BRETON rise again from the grave, and choose his course through this life, it would scarcely be that of a Poet, harassed by poverty; and crowned with fruitless laurels. His "*Melancholike Humours*" flow from one deeply immersed in the Castalian spring, who had drank fully of its inspiring waters. These strains will, I trust, hereafter be received among the pure relics of the departed genius of England!

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TO THE READER.



ASQUIL, having been long in his dumps, in somewhat better than a brown study, hath brought forth the fruits of a few "*Melancholy Humours;*" which chiefly he commendeth to spirits of his own nature, full of melancholy, and as near Bedlam as Moor-gate: a figure in the fields, to be easily deciphered. To be short, and to grow towards an end, ere I have well begun, I will tell you: the gentleman's brains were much troubled, as you may see by his perplexities: but with studying how to make one line level with another, in more rhyme than perhaps some will think reason, with much ado about nothing, he hath made a piece of work as little worth. He that can give him less commendation, let him use his art. For mine own part, I have taken pains to write his Will, which he hath sent to the world to like as it list. According to whose will, I leave it: entreating no man to wrest his will to any thing further than may stand with his pleasure; but to speak indifferently of all things, as he finds cause. And so I rest

Your friend,

N. B.

IN AUTHOREM.



*HOU, that would' st find the habit of true
passion,
And see a mind attir'd in perfect strains;
Not wearing moods, as gallants do a fashion,
In these pied times, only to shew their brains!*

*Look here on BRETON'S Work: the master print,
Where such perfections to the life do rise;
If they seem wry, to such as look asquint,
The fault's not in the object, but their eyes.*

*For, as one coming with a lateral view
Unto a cunning-piece wrought perspective,
Wants faculty to make a censure true;
So with this Author's readers will it thrive:*

*Which, being eyed directly, I divine
His proof their praise will meet, as in this line.*

BEN JONSON.

Melancholike Humours.

SEE, AND SAY NOTHING.



H! my thoughts, keep in your words,
Lest their passage do repent ye;
Knowing, Fortune still affords
Nothing, but may discontent ye.

If your saint be like the sun,
Sit not ye in Phœbus' chair,
Lest, when once the horses run,
Ye be Dedalus his heir.

If your labours well deserve,
Let your silence only grace them;
And in patience hope preserve,
That no fortune can deface them.

If your friend do grow unkind,
Grieve, but do not seem to show it:

For a patient heart shall find
Comfort, when the soul shall know it.

If your trust be all betray'd,
Try but trust no more at all:
But in soul be not dismay'd;
Whatsoever do befall.

In yourselves yourselves enclose,
Keep your secrecies unseen;
Lest when ye yourselves disclose,
Ye had better never been.

And whatever be your state,
Do not languish over long;
Lest you find it, all too late,
Sorrow be a deadly song.

And be comforted in this,
If your passions be concealed,

Cross or comfort, bale or bliss,
'Tis the best is not revealed.

So, my dearest thoughts, adieu!
Hark whereto my soul doth call ye,
Be but secret, wise, and true,
Fear no evil can befall ye.

WHAT IS HELL?

WHAT is the place that some do paint for Hell?
A lake of horror for the life of man:
Is it not then the nest wherein I dwell,
That knows no joy, since first my life began?

What are the devils? Spirits of tormenting;
What else are they, that vex me in each vein?
With wretched thoughts my woful spirit tempting,
Or else perplex me in an after pain.

4 *Melancholike Humours.*

What is the fire, but an effect of sin,
That keeps my heart in an unkindly heat?
How long shall I this life continue in?
Till true repentance mercy doth intreat;

And Patience cry, even at the latest breath,
Save me sweet Lord! yet from the second death.

MAL CONTENT.

If I desir'd unto the world to live,
Or sought in soul to serve the golden god:
If I did homage to an idol give,
Or with the wicked wish'd to have abode.

Then, well might Justice lay her sword upon me,
In due correction of my crooked heart;
But shall I live, in soul thus woe-begone me,
That seek in faith to save the better part?

Ah, wretched Soul! why dost thou murmur so?
It is thy cross, and thou art born to bear it:
Through hellish griefs thy heart to heaven must go,
For Patience' crown, if thou wilt live to wear it.

Then rest with this, since Faith is Virtue's friend,
Death ends distress, Heaven makes a happy end.

A DOLEFUL PASSION.

OH, tired heart! too full of sorrows,
In night-like days, despairing morrows;
How can'st thou think, so deeply grieved,
To hope to live to be relieved?

Good Fortune hath all grace forsworn thee,
And cruel Care hath too much torn thee:
Unfaithful friends do all deceive thee;
Acquaintance all unkindly leave thee.

6 *Melancholike Humours.*

Beauty, out of her book doth blot thee,
And Love hath utterly forgot thee:
Patience doth but to passion move thee,
While only Honour lives to love thee.

Thine enemies all ill devise thee,
Thy friends but little good advise thee;
And they who most do duty owe thee,
Do seem as though they do not know thee.

Thus Pity weeps to look upon thee,
To see how thou art woe-begone thee;
And while these passions seek to spill thee,
Death but attends the hour to kill thee.

And since no thought is coming to thee,
That any way may comfort do thee;
Dispose thy thoughts as best may please thee,
That Heaven, of all thy hell, may ease thee.

A TESTAMENT UPON THE PASSION.

**To Care, that crucifies my heart,
My sighs and sobs I do bequeath;
And to my Sorrow's deepest smart,
The latest gasp that I do breathe.**

**To Fortune I bequeath my folly,
To give to such as seek her grace:
To faithless friends, that fortune wholly,
That brought me in this heavy case.**

**To Beauty I bequeath mine age;
To Love, the hate of wit and sense;
To Patience, but the cure of rage;
To Honour, Virtue's patience.**

**Mine enemies I do forgive;
And to my friends I give my love;**

8 *Melancholike Humours.*

And wish ungrateful hearts may live
But like ingratitude to prove.

To Pity I bequeath my tears,
To fill her eyes when they be dry;
To Faith, the fearless thoughts of fears,
To give to life, to let me die.

My care I do bequeath to Death,
To cut the threads that thoughts do spin;
And at my latest gasp of breath,
To Heaven my soul, to Hell my sin.

A FANTASTIC SOLEMN HUMOUR.

SOUND, good Reason! sound my sorrows,
Equal them with any living;
Find the worst of all her giving,
When she most her mischief borrows.

Melancholike Humours. 9

Leave not patience all perplexed,
Where no passions are appeased;
But her torments, never eased,
Keep her spirit too much vexed.

Tell, Oh! tell the truest story
That hath long time been described;
Whereto justly is ascribed
Sorrow's pride, and Death his glory.

Love bred in Discretion's blindness,
Shadows, for the sun affecting
Nothing, but nothing effecting,
Shows the cross of Nature's kindness.

Wit, be witch'd with wanton Beauty,
Lost the reins of Reason's bridle;
And, in Folly all too idle,
Brake the bands of Reason's duty.

Time misspent in Folly's trifles,
With repentance sorrow feeding,
In the rules of Reason's reading,
Finds them nothing else but nifles.

Care, yet seeking to recover
Indiscretion's heavy losses,
Found, in casting up my crosses,
Sorrow only left the lover.

A BRIEF OF SORROW.

MUSE of sadness! near Death's fashion,
Too near madness, write my passion;
Pains possess me, Sorrows spill me,
Cares distress me, all would kill me;
Hopes have fail'd me, Fortune foil'd me,
Fears have quail'd me, all have spoil'd me:

Woes have worn me, sighs have soakt me;
Thoughts have torn me, all have broke me.
Beauty strook me, Love hath catch'd me,
Death hath took me, all dispatch'd me.

A SOLEMN FANCY.

SORROW in my heart breedeth
A cockatrice's nest,
Where every young bird feedeth
Upon my Heart's unrest.

Where every peck they give me,
(Which every hour they do,)
Unto such pain they drive me,
I know not what to do.

Oh, brood! unhap'ly hatch'd
Of such a cursed kind,
Where Death and Sorrow match'd,
Live, but to kill the mind.

Word's torments are but trifles,
That but conceits confound;
And Nature's griefs but nifles
Unto the Spirit's wound.

They are but Care's good-morrows
That passions can declare;
While my Heart's inward sorrows
Are all without compare.

Fortune, she seeks to swear me
To all may discontent me;
Yet says, she doth forbear me,
She doth no more torment me.

Beauty she doth retain me
In scarce a favour's tittle;
And though she do disdain me,
She thinks my grief too little.

Love falls into a laughing
At Reason's little good,
While Sorrow, with her quaffing,
Is drunk with my heart-blood.

But let her drink and spare not,
Until my heart be dry;
And let Love laugh, I care not;
My hope is, I shall die!

And Death shall only tell
My froward fortune's fashion,
That nearest unto hell
Was found the Lover's passion.

A SOLEMN SONNET.

FORTUNE hath writ characters on my heart
As full of crosses as the skin can hold,
Which tell of torments, tearing every part,
While **Death** and **Sorrow** do my fate unfold.

Patience sits leaning like a pining soul,
That had no heart to think of **Hope's** relief;
While fruitless cares discomfort do enrol
Within the pound of never-ending grief.

Thoughts fly about, as all in fear confounded;
Reason grown mad, with too much mal-content;
Love, passion-rent, to see his patience wounded,
With dreadful terrors of **Despair's** intent.

While **Care** concludes, in comforts overthrown,
When **Death** can speak, my passions shall be shown.

AN EXTREME PASSION.

**Out of the depth of deadly grief,
Tormenting day and night;
A wounded heart and wretched soul
Depriv'd of all delight;**

**Where never thought of comfort came,
That passion might appease;
Or by the smallest spark of hope
Might give the smallest ease:**

**Let me intreat that solemn Muse
That serves but Sorrow's turn,
In ceaseless sighs and endless sobs
To help my heart to mourn.**

But, Oh! what thought beyond all thought
Hath thought to think upon,
Where Patience finds her greatest power
In passions overgone.

That near the door of Nature's death
In doleful notes doth dwell;
In Horror's fits that will describe
My too much figur'd hell.

What want, what wrong, what care, what cross,
May crucify a heart;
But day and hour I do endure
In all and every part.

Want to sustain the Body's need,
Wrong to distract the mind:
Where Want makes Wit and Reason both
To go against their kind.

Care to devise for Comfort's help;
But so by Fortune crost,
As kills the heart, to cast the eye
On nought but labour lost.

Desire to live, in spite of Death,
Yet still in living dying;
And so a greater death than death,
By want of dying, trying.

Oh, hell of hells! if ever earth
Such horror can afford,
Where such a world of helpless cares
Do lay the heart aboard.

No day, no night, no thought, no dream,
But of that doleful nature,
That may amaze, or sore affright,
A most afflicted creature.

Friends turn'd to foes, foes use their force;
And Fortune in her pride,
Shakes hand with Fate, to make my soul
The weight of sorrow bide.

Care brings in sickness, sickness pain,
And pain with patience passion,
With biting inmost bitter griefs
Brings feature out of fashion;

Where brawn-fall'n cheeks, heart-scalding sighs,
And dimmed eyes with tears,
Do shew, in Life's anatomy,
What burden Sorrow bears.

Where all day long in helpless cares,
All hopeless of relief,
I wish for night, I might not see
The objects of my grief.

And when night comes, woes keep my wits
In such a waking vein,
That I could wish, though to my grief,
That it were day again.

Thus days are nights, which nights are days,
Which days are like those nights,
That to my passion's sense present
But only Sorrow's sights;

Which to the eye but of the mind
Of Misery appear,
To fill the heart of forlorn Hope
Too full of heavy cheer.

Oh heart! how canst thou hold so long,
And art not broke ere this?
When all thy strings are but the strains
That comfort strikes amiss.

Yet must thou make thy music still
But of that mournful strain,
Where Sorrow, in the sound of death,
Doth shew her sweetest vein:

Or where her Muses all consent
In their consort to try
Their sweetest music, in desire
To die, and cannot die.

The pelican that kills herself,
Her young ones for to feed,
Is pleas'd to die that they may live,
That suck when she doth bleed:

But while I in those cares consume
That would my spirit kill,
Nought lives by me, when I must die,
To feed but Sorrow's will.

The hart that's hunted all day long,
Hath sport yet with the hounds,
And haply beats off many a dog
Before his deathly wounds:

But my poor heart is hunted still
With such a cruel cry,
As in their dogged humours live,
While I alone must die.

The swan that sings before her death,
Doth shew that she is pleas'd,
To know that death will not be long
In helping the diseas'd:

But my poor swan-like soul, alas!
Hath no such power to sing;
Because she knows not when my death
Will make my care a king.

What shall I say? but only say
I know not what to say:
So many torments tear my heart,
And tug it every way.

My sun is turn'd into a shade,
Or else mine eyes are blind,
That Sorrow's cloud makes all seem dark,
That comes into my mind.

My youth to age; or else because
My comforts are so cold,
My sorrow makes me in conceit
To be decrepid, old.

My hopes to fears; or else because
My fortunes are forlorn,
My fancy makes me make myself
Unto myself a scorn.

My life to death; or else because
My heart is so perplexed,
I find myself but living dead,
To feel my soul so vexed.

For what is here that earth can yield
In Pleasure's sweetest vein,
But in the midst of all my cares
Doth still increase my pain?

While epicures are over-glut,
I lie, and starve for food;
Because my conscience cannot thrive
Upon ill-gotten good.

While other swim in choice of silks,
I sit alone in rags;
Because I cannot fit the time
To fill the golden bags.

While other are bedeck'd in gold,
In pearl, and precious stone;
I sigh to see they have so much,
And I can light of none.

Not that I envy their estate,
But wish that God would give
Some comfort to my careful hope,
Whereby my heart might live.

Some please themselves in choice of sports,
In trifles and in toys;
While my poor feeble spirit feeds
Of nothing but annoys.

Some have their houses stately built,
And gorgeous to behold;
While in a cottage, bare and poor,
I bide the bitter cold.

Some have their chariots and their horse,
To bear them too and fro;
While I am glad to walk on foot,
And glad I can do so.

Some have their music's harmony,
To please their idle ears;
While of the song of sorrow still
My soul the burden bears.

Some have their choice of all perfumes,
That Nature's art can give;
While sin doth stink so in my soul,
As makes me loath to live.

They, like the wielders of the world,
Command, and have their will;
While I, a weakling in the world,
Am slave to sorrow still.

The owl, that makes the night her day,
Delights still in the dark;
But I am forc'd to play the owl,
That have been bred a lark.

The eagle from the lowest vale
Can mount the lofty sky;
But I am fall'n down from the hill,
And in the vale must die.

The sparrow in a prince's house
Can find a place to build;
I scarce can find out any place
That will my comfort yield.

The little wren doth find a worm,
The little finch a seed;
While my poor heart doth hunger still,
And finds but little feed.

The bee doth find her honey-flower,
The butterfly her leaf;
But I can find a world of corn,
That yields not me a sheaf.

The horse, the ox, the silly ass,
That tug out all the day,
At night come home, and take their rest,
And lay their work away:

While my poor heart, both day and night,
In passions overtoil'd;
By over-labour of my brain
Doth find my spirit spoil'd.

The winds do blow away the clouds,
That would obscure the sun;
And how all-glorious is the sky,
When once the storms are done:

But in the heaven of my heart's hope,
Where my love's light doth shine;
I nothing see, but clouds of cares,
Or else my sun decline.

The earth is water'd, smooth'd and drest,
To keep her gardens gay;
While my poor heart, in woeful thoughts,
Must wither still away.

The sea is sometimes at a calm,
Where ships at anchor ride;
And fishes, on the sunny shore,
Do play on every side:

But my poor heart, in Sorrow's seas,
Is sick of such a qualm;
As, while the stormy tempests hold,
Can never look for calm.

So that I see, each bird and beast,
The sea, the earth, the sky,
All sometime in their pleasures live,
While I alone must die.

Now think, if all this be too true,
(As would it were not so)
If any creature live on earth,
That do like sorrow know.

Nay, ask of Sorrow, even herself,
To think how I am wounded,
If she be not, to see my woes,
Within herself confounded:

Or say, no figure can suffice
My sorrow's frame to fashion,
Where Patience thus hath show'd herself,
Beyond herself in passion.

Par nulla figura dolori, nec dolor meo.

A SOLEMN FAREWELL TO THE WORLD.

OH, forlorn Fancy! whereto dost thou live,
To weary out the senses with unrest?
Hopes are but cares, that but discomfort give,
While only fools do climb the phoenix nest:
To heart-sick souls all joys are but a jest.
Thou dost in vain but strive against the stream,
With blinded eyes to see the sunny beam.

Die with desire, abandon'd from delight,
Thy weary winter lasteth all the year:
Say to thyself that darkness is the light,
Wherein doth nothing but thy death appear;
While wit and sense, in Sorrow's heavy cheer,
Finds thee an humour, but unkindly bred,
Of Hope's illusions, in too weak a head.

**Fortune affrights thee with a thousand fears,
While Folly feeds thee with abuse of wit;
And while thy force in fainting passion wears,
Patience is ready to increase the fit,
Where agonies in their extremes do sit:
So that, each way, thy soul is so perplexed,
As better die, than live to be so vexed.**

**Say, Patience somewhat do assuage thy pain;
Prolonged cures are too uncomfortable;
And where that care doth never comfort give,
The state, alas! must needs be miserable,
Where Sorrow's labours are so lamentable,
That Silence says, that to the soul complains,
Concealed sorrows are the killing pains.**

**Then do not cease to sigh and sob thy fill,
Bleed in the tears of true love's living blood;
Shew how unkindness seeks the heart to kill,**

That hides a buzzard in a falcon's hood:
Feed not thyself with misconceited good;
Better to starve, than in a sugar'd pill
To taste the poison of the Spirit's ill.

But if thou can'st content thee with thy life,
And wilt endure a double death to live;
If thou can'st bear that bitter kind of strife,
Where cross conceits but discontents do give:
If to this end thou can'st not humour drive,
And Care's true patience can command thee so;
Give me then leave to tell thee what I know.

I know too well, that all too long have try'd,
That earth containeth not that may content thee;
Sorrow will so beset thee on each side,
That Wit nor Reason can the thought invent thee,
But that will some way serve for to torment thee:

**Hope will deceive thee, Happiness go by thee,
Fortune will fail thee, and the World defy thee.**

**Beauty will blind thine eyes, bewitch thine heart,
Confound thy senses, and command thy will,
Scorn thy desire, not look on thy desert,
Disdain thy service, 'quite thy good with ill,
And make no care thy very soul to kill.
Time will outgo thee, Sorrow overtake thee,
And Death, a shadow of a substance, make thee.**

**I know this world will never be for thee;
Conscience must carry thee another way:
Another world must be for thee and me,
Where happy thoughts must be their holiday,
While heavenly comforts never will decay.
We must not think in this ill age to thrive,
Where Faith and Love are scarcely found alive.**

We must not build our houses on the sands,
Where every flood will wash them quite away;
Nor set our seals unto those wicked bands,
Where damned souls their debts in hell must pay:
Our states must stand upon a better stay;
Upon the rock we must our houses build,
That will our frames from wind and water shield.

Go, bid the world, with all its trash, farewell!
And tell the earth it shall be all but dust:
These wicked wares, that worldlings buy and sell,
The moth will eat, or else the canker rust:
All flesh is grass, and to the grave it must.
This sink of sin is but the way to hell;
Leave it, I say, and bid the world farewell!

Account of pomp but as a shadow'd power,
And think of friends but as the summer flies;
Esteem of beauty as a fading flower,

And lovers' fancies but as fabled lies:
Know, that on earth there is no Paradise.
Who sees not heaven is surely spirit-blind,
And like a body that doth lack a mind.

Then let us lie as dead, till there we live,
Where only love doth live for ever blest;
And only love the only life doth give,
That brings the soul unto eternal rest:
Let us this wicked, wretched world detest,
Where graceless hearts in hellish sins persever,
And fly to heaven, to live in grace for ever.

A SOLEMN CONCEIT.

DOTH Love live in Beauty's eyes?
Why then are they so unloving?
Patience in her passion proving,
There his sorrow chiefly lies.

Lives belief in lovers' hearts?
Why then are they unbelieving?
Hourly so the spirit grieving,
With a thousand jealous smarts?

Is there pleasure in Love's passion?
Why then is it so unpleasing,
Heart and spirit both diseasing,
Where the wits are out of fashion.

No: Love sees in Beauty's eyes
He hath only lost his seeing,
Where in Sorrow's only being
All his comfort wholly dies.

Faith within the heart of Love,
Fearful of the thing it hath;
Treading of a trembling path,
Doth but jealousy approve.

In Love's passion then what pleasure,
Which is but a lunacy,
Where grief, fear, and jealousy,
Plague the senses out of measure?

Farewell, then, unkindly Fancy,
In thy courses all too cruel:
Woe the price of such a jewel,
As turns Reason to a frenzy!

A STRANGE A, B, C.

To learn the baby's A, B, C,
Is fit for children, not for me.
I know the letters all so well,
I need not learn the way to spell;
And for the cross, before the row,
I learn'd it all too long ago.

Then let them go to school that list,
To hang the lip at---*Had I wist:*
I never lov'd a book of horn,
Nor leaves that have their letters worn;
Nor with a fescue to direct me,
Where every puny shall correct me.

I will the truant play awhile,
And with mine ear mine eye beguile;
And only hear what other see,
What mocketh them as well as me;
And laugh at him that goes to school,
To learn with me to play the fool.

But, soft awhile: I have mistook,
This is but some imagin'd book,
That wilful hearts in wantons' eyes
Do only by contents devise;

Where spell and put together, prove
The reading of the rules of Love.

But if it be so, let it be:
It shall no lesson be for me..
Let them go spell that cannot read,
And know the cross, unto their speed;
While I am taught but to discern,
How to forget the thing I learn.

FIE ON PRIDE.

THE hidden Pride that lurks in Beauty's eyes,
And overlooks the humble hearts of Love,
Doth nothing else but vain effects despise,
That may discretion from the mind remove.

Oh, how it works in wit, for idle words
To buy repentance but with labour lost;

While Sorrow's fortune nothing else affords,
But showers of rain upon a bitter frost:

A wicked shadow that deceives the sight,
And breeds an itch that overruns the heart;
Which, leaving Reason in a piteous plight;
Consumes the spirit with a cureless smart:

While wounded Patience, in her passion, cries,
Fie upon Pride, that lurks in Beauty's eyes.

A FAREWELL TO LOVE.

FAREWELL Love, and loving folly,
All thy thoughts are too unholy:
Beauty strikes thee full of blindness,
And then kills thee with unkindness.

Farewell wit, and witty reason,
All betray'd by Fancy's treason:
Love hath of all joy bereft thee,
And to Sorrow only left thee.

Farewell will, and wilful fancy,
All in danger of a frenzy,
Love to Beauty's bow hath won thee,
And together all undone thee.

Farewell Beauty, Sorrow's agent;
Farewell Sorrow, Patience' pageant;
Farewell Patience, Passion's stayer;
Farewell Passion, Love's betrayer.

Sorrow's agent, Patience' pageant,
Passion's stayer, Love's betrayer,
Beauty, Sorrow, Patience, Passion;
Farewell life, of such a fashion.

**Fashion, so good fashions spilling;
Passion, so with passions killing;
Patience, so with sorrow wounding;
Farewell Beauty, Love's confounding.**

A JESTING CURSE.

**FIE upon that too much Beauty,
That so blindeth Reason's seeing,
As, in swearing all Love's duty,
Gives him no where else a being.**

**Cursed be thou, all in kindness,
That with Beauty Love hast wounded;
Blessing Love, yet in such blindness,
As in Beauty is confounded.**

Ever may'st thou live tormented
With the faith of Love unfeigned,
Till thy heart may be contented
To relieve whom thou hast pained.

Thus, in wroth of so well pleased,
As concealeth joys confessing,
Till my pain be wholly eased,
Cursed be thou, all in blessing.

So farewell! and fairly note it,
He who as his soul doth hate thee,
From his very heart hath wrote it,
Never evil thought come at thee!

A SOLEMN TOY.

If that Love had been a king,
He would have commanded Beauty:
But he is a silly thing,
That hath sworn to do her duty.

If that Love had been a God,
He had then been full of grace:
But how grace and love are odd,
'Tis too plain a piteous case.

No: Love is an idle jest,
That hath only made a word,
Like unto a cuckoo's nest,
That hath never hatch'd a bird.

Then from nothing to conceive
That may any substance be,
Yet so many doth deceive;
Lord of heaven! deliver me.

A DISPLEASURE AGAINST LOVE.

Love is witty, but not wise,
When he stares on Beauty's eyes;
Finding wonders in conceit,
That do fall out but deceit.

Wit is stable, but not staid,
When his senses are betray'd,
Where, too late, Sorrow doth prove
Beauty makes a fool of Love.

Youth is forward, but too fond,
When he falls in Cupid's bond,
Where repentance lets him see,
Fancy fast is never free.

Age is cunning, but unkind,
When he once grows Cupid-blind:
For when Beauty is untoward,
Age can never be but froward.

So that I do find in brief,
In the grounds of Nature's grief,
Age, and youth, and wit do prove,
Beauty makes a fool of Love.

A FAREWELL TO CONCEIT.

**FAREWELL Conceit! Conceit no more well fare:
Hope feeds the heart with humours, to no end:
Fortune is false, in dealing of her share:
Virtue in heaven must only seek a friend.**

**Adieu, Desire! Desire no more, adieu!
Will hath no leisure to regard desert:
Love finds, too late, the proverb all too true,
That Beauty's eyes stood never in her heart.**

**Away, poor Love! Love, seek no more a way
Unto thy woe, where wishing is no wealth:
In night's deep darkness never look for day,
Nor in heart's sickness ever seek for health.**

**Desire, Conceit, away; adieu! farewell!
Love is deceiv'd, that seeks for heaven in hell.**

AN UNHAPPY, SOLEMN, JESTING CURSE.

**OH! venom, cursed, wicked; wretched eyes,
The killing lookers on the heart of Love:
Where witching Beauty lives but to devise
The plague of wit, and passion's hell to prove.**

**That snowy neck that chillest, more than snow,
Both eyes and hearts, that live but to behold thee;
That graceless lip, from whence Love's grief doth grow,
Who doth in all his sweetest sense enfold thee.**

**Those chaining hairs, more hard than iron chains,
In tying fast the fairest thoughts of Love:
Ye shameful cheeks, that in your blushing veins
The ravish'd passions of the mind do prove.**

Ye spider fingers of those spiteful hands,
That work but webs to tangle Fancy's eyes:
That idol-breast, that like an image stands,
Where Love's confusions all included be:

To thee, that can'st or will not bend thy will,
To use thy gifts, all gracious in their nature;
To Patience' good, and not to Passion's ill,
And may'st, and wilt not be, a blessed creature.

I wish and pray, thine eyes may weep for woe,
Thou cannot get one look of thy beloved;
Thy snowy neck may be as cold as snow,
With cold of fear it hath no fancy moved.

Thy lip, in anger by thy teeth be bitten,
It cannot give one kissing sweet of Love;
And by thy hands thy shrivel'd hairs be smitten,
For want of holding of thy hopes' behove.

Thy blushing cheeks lose all their lively blood,
With pining passions of impatient thought;
That idol-body, like a piece of wood,
Consume, to see it is esteem'd for nought.

Those spider fingers, and those fairy feet,
The cramp so crook, that they may creep for grief:
And, in that spirit, Sorrow's poison meet,
To bring on death, where Love hath no relief.

All these, and more just measures of amiss
Upon thy frowns, on faithful Love befall:
But sweetly smile---and then heavens pour their bliss
On thy hair, neck, cheeks, lip, hands, feet, and all.

A QUARREL WITH LOVE.

OH! that I could write a story
Of Love's dealing with affection:
How he makes the spirit sorry,
That is touch'd with his infection!

But he doth so closely wind him
In the plaits of will ill-pleased,
That the heart can never find him,
Till it be too much diseased.

'Tis a subtle kind of spirit,
Of a venom-kind of nature;
That can, like a coney-ferret,
Creep unwares upon a creature.

Never eye that can behold it,
Though it worketh first by seeing;
Nor conceit, that can unfold it,
Though in thoughts be all his being.

Oh! it maketh old men witty,
Young men wanton, women idle;
While that Patience weeps, for Pity,
Reason bits not Nature's bridle.

In itself it hath no substance,
Yet is working worlds of wonder;
While, in Frenzy's fearful instance,
Wit and Sense are put asunder.

What it is, is in conjecture,
Seeking much, but nothing finding;
Like to Fancy's architecture,
With illusions Reason blinding.

Day and night it never resteth,
Mocking Fancy with ill fortune;
While the spirit it molesteth,
That doth patience still importune.

Yet for all this, how to find it,
'Tis impossible to show it;
When the Muse that most doth mind it,
Will be furthest off to know it.

Yet can Beauty so retain it
In the profit of her service,
That she closely can maintain it,
For her servant, chief in office.

In her eye she chiefly breeds it;
In her cheeks she chiefly hides it;
In her servant's faith she feeds it,
While his only heart abides it.

All his humour is in changing,
All his work is no invention,
All his pleasure is in ranging,
All his truth but in intention.

Strange in all effects conceived,
But in substance nothing sounded;
While the senses are deceived,
That on idle thoughts are grounded.

Not to dwell upon a trifle,
That doth Folly's hope befall;
'Tis but a new nothing rife,
Made for fools to play withal.

A WISH IN VAIN.

Oh! that Wit were not amazed
At the wonder of his senses,
Or his eyes not overgazed
In Minerva's excellences.

Oh! that Reason were not foiled
In the rules of all his learning,
Or his learning were not spoiled
In the sweet of Love's discerning.

Oh! that Beauty were not froward,
In regard of Reason's duty,
Or that Will were not untoward
In the wayward wit of Beauty.

But since all in vain are wishes,
Patience tells me that have past it,
Poison'd broth, in silver dishes,
Kills their stomachs that do taste it.

Wit and Reason, Love and Learning,
All in Beauty's eyes are blinded,
Where in sense of sweet discerning,
She will be unkindly minded.

Let those hearts whose eyes perceive her,
Triumph, but in thoughts tormented,
Labour all they can to leave her,
Or else die, and be contented.

A CONCEIT UPON AN EAGLE AND A PHENIX.

THERE sat sometime an Eagle on a hill,
Hanging his wings, as if he could not fly:
Black was his coat, and tawny was his bill,
Grey were his legs, and gloomy was his eye,
Blunted his talons, and his train so bruised,
As if his bravery had been much abused.

This foul old bird, of some unhappy brood,
That could abide no hawk of higher wing,
But fed his gorge upon such cruel food,
As might in fear maintain a cruel king,
Fair on a rock of pearl and precious stone
Espied a Phoenix sitting all alone.

No sooner had this heavenly bird in sight,
But up he flickers, as he would have flown:

But all in fear to make so far a flight,
 Until his pens were somewhat harder grown,
He gave a rouse: as who should say, in rage
He show'd the fury of his froward age.

And, for this Phoenix still did front his eyes,
 He call'd a council of his kites together;
With whom in haste he would the mean devise,
 By secret art to lead an army thither,
And so pull down, from place of high estate,
This heavenly bird that he so had in hate.

Much talk there was, and wondrous heed was held,
 How to atchieve this high attempt in hand:
Some were sent out to soar about the field,
 Where flew this grace and glory of the land,
To mark her course, and how she made her wing,
And how her strength might stand with such a king.

And forthwith should such cages be devised,
As should enclose full many thousand fowls;
By whom her seat should quickly be surprised,
And all her birds should handled be like owls:
No time detract---this deed must needs be done:
And ere they went, the world was wholly won.

But, soft awhile: no sooner seen the land,
But, ere they came in kenning of the coast,
So great a force their fortune did withstand,
That all the bravery of the birds was lost:
Some leak'd, some sank, and some so ran on ground,
The cages burst, and all the birds were drown'd.

But when the Eagle heard what was become
Of all his flight, that flicker'd here and there,
Some sick, some hurt, some lame, and all and some
Or far from hope, or all too near in fear,

He stoop'd his train, and hung his head so sore,
As if his heart had never burst before.

A CONCEITED FANCY.

PURE colours can abide no stain;
The Sun can never lose his light;
And Virtue hath a heavenly vein,
That well may claim a queenly right:
So give my mistress but her due,
Who told me all these tales of you.

From heaven on earth the Sun doth shine,
From Virtue comes Discretion's love;
They both are in themselves divine,
Yet work for weaker hearts' behove:
So would my mistress had her due,
To tell me still these tales to you.

But, Oh! the Sun is in a cloud,
And Virtue lives on sweets unseen;
The earth with heaven is not allow'd;
A beggar must not love a queen:
So must my mistress have her due,
To tell me still these tales to you.

Then shine, fair Sun, when clouds are gone;
Live, Virtue, in thy queenly love;
Choose some such place to shine upon,
As may thy Paradise approve:
That when my mistress hath her due,
I may hear all this heaven in you.

A SMILE MISCONSTRUED.

By your leave, a little while:
Love hath got a Beauty's smile

From on earth the fairest face:
But he may be much deceived,
Kindness may be misconceived,
Laughing oft is in disgrace.

Oh! but he doth know her nature,
And to be that blessed creature,
That doth answer Love with kindness:
Tush! the Phoenix is a fable;
Phœbus' horses have no stable;
Love is often full of blindness.

Oh! but he doth hear the voice,
Which doth make his heart rejoice
With the sweetness of her sound:
Simple hope may be abused.
Hears he not he is refused;
Which may give his heart a wound?

**No: Love can believe it never,
Beauty favours once and ever;
Though proud Envy play the elf:
Truth and Patience have approved,
Love shall ever be beloved,
If my mistress be herself.**

AN ODD HUMOUR.

**PURELY fair, and fairly wise,
Blessed wit, and blessed eyes,
Blessed wise, and blessed fair,
Never may thy bliss impair.**

**Kindly true, and truly kind,
Blessed heart, and blessed mind;**

Blessed kind, and blessed true,
Even may thy bliss renew.

Sweetly dear, and dearly sweet,
Blessed, where these blessings meet;
Blessed meetings, never cease;
Ever may thy bliss increase.

Blessed Beauty, Wit, and Sense,
Blest in Nature's excellence,
Where all blessings perish never,
Blessed may'st thou be for ever!

A WAGGERY.

CHILDREN'S Ahs! and Women's Ohs!
Do a wondrous grief disclose;
Where a dug the one will still,
And the 't'other but a will.

Then, in God's name, let them cry;
While they cry, they will not die:
For, but few that are so curst,
As to cry until they burst.

Say, some children are untoward;
So some women are as froward:
Let them cry them, 't will not kill them;
There is time enough to still them.

But if Pity will be pleased
To relieve the small diseased,
When the help is once applying,
They will quickly leave their crying.

Let the child then suck his fill,
Let the woman have her will;
All will hush, was heard before;
Ah and Oh! will cry no more.

AN ODD CONCEIT.

LOVELY kind, and kindly loving,
Such a mind were worth the moving:
Truly fair, and fairly true,
Where are all these, but in you?

Wisely kind, and kindly wise,
Blessed life, where such love lies:
Wise, and kind, and fair, and true,
Lovely live all these in you.

Sweetly dear, and dearly sweet,
Blessed, where these blessings meet:
Sweet, fair, wise, kind, blessed, true,
Blessed be all these in you.

A DOLEFUL FANCY.

SORROW rip up all thy senses,
Nearest unto Horror's nature:
Taste of all thy quintessences,
That may kill a wretched creature.

Then behold my woeful spirit
All in passions overthrown;
And full closely, like a ferret,
Seize upon it for thine own.

But if thou do grow dismay'd,
When thou dost but look on me;
When my passions, well display'd,
Will but make a blast of thee.

Then, in grief of thy disgraces,
Where my fortunes do deface thee,
Tell thy Muses to their faces,
They may learn of me to grace thee.

For thy sighs, thy sobs, and tears,
But thy common badges been;
While the pain, the spirit bears,
Eats away the heart unseen.

Where in silence swallow'd up
Are the sighs and tears of Love,
Which are drawn to fill the cup,
Must be drawn to Death's behove.

Then beholding my heart's swoon,
In my torments more and more;
Say, when thou dost sit thee down,
Thou wert never grac'd before.

AN EPITAPH UPON POET SPENSER.

**MOURNFUL Muses, Sorrow's minions,
Dwelling in Despair's opinions;
Ye, that never thought invented
How a heart may be contented;
(But in torments all distressed,
Hopeless how to be redressed,
All with howling and with crying,
Live in a continual dying,)
Sing a dirge on SPENSER'S death,
Till your souls be out of breath.**

**Bid the dunces keep their dens,
And the poets break their pens;**

Bid the shepherds shed their tears,
And the nymphs go tear their hairs;
Bid the scholars leave their reading,
And prepare their hearts to bleeding;
Bid the valiant and the wise
Full of sorrows fill their eyes;
All for grief that he is gone,
Who did grace them every one.

Fairy Queen! show fairest Queen,
How her fair in thee is seen:
Shepherds' Calendar! set down,
How to figure best a clown;
As for *Mother Hubbard's Tale*,
Crack the nut, and take the shell:
And for other works of worth,
All too good to wander forth,
Grieve that ever you were wrote,
And your Author be forgot.

Farewell, *Art of Poetry*,
Scorning idle foolery:
Farewell, true conceited Reason,
Where was never thought of treason:
Farewell Judgment, with invention,
To describe a heart's intention:
Farewell Wit, whose sound and sense
Show a poet's excellence.
Farewell, all in one together,
And with SPENSER's garland wither.

And if any graces live
That will virtue honour give;
Let them shew their true affection
In the depth of Grief's perfection,
In describing forth her story,
When she is most deeply sorry;
That they all may wish to hear
Such a song, and such a quire,

72 *Melancholike Humours.*

As, with all the woes they have,
Follow SPENSER to his grave.



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